

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 10465 101013Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20
ACDA-12 IO-14 EB-08 NRC-07 OES-09 SOE-02 DOE-15
CEQ-01 /143 W

-----071339 110426Z /14

R 100912Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2653
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL MADRAS

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 10465

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MNUC IN
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER ANSWERS CHARGES ON NUCLEAR POLICY

1. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN SRINAGAR JULY 9, PRIME MINISTER DESAI WAS ASKED ABOUT A REPORTED ACCUSATION BY MRS. GANDHI THAT HE HAD SUCCUMBED TO US PRESSURE ON THE ISSUE OF NUCLEAR TESTS FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES. ACCORDING TO THE "TIMES OF INDIA" ACCOUNT, THE PRIME MINISTER RESPONDED, "CAN THERE BE ANYTHING MORE FANTASTIC THAN THIS? DO YOU SEE ANY EVIDENCE OF IT. IF THERE IS NO EVIDENCE, WHY DO YOU BELIEVE SUCH LIES?" THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO REPORTEDLY REJECTED THE CHARGE, RAISED AT A RECENT MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENTARY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THAT HIS STAND DID NOT HAVE THE SANCTION OF THE CABINET. DESAI REITERATED HIS VIEW THAT NUCLEAR TESTS WERE NOT NECESSARY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES EVEN THOUGH SOME SCIENTISTS MIGHT HAVE DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT. ASKED IF NUCLEAR WEAPONS WERE NOT NECESSARY FOR INDIA'S
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DEFENSE IF NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES DEVELOPED NUCLEAR WEAPONS, DESAI SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT BE WORRIED AND THAT THE COUNTRY CAN BE DEFENDED WITHOUT RESORTING TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS. ACCORDING TO THE "HINDUSTAN TIMES", DESAI SAID THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS CANNOT WIN A WAR AND CAN ONLY PUT FEAR INTO THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE. THE "NATIONAL HERALD" ADDED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SAID

THAT INDIA HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY AGAINST NUCLEAR
WEAPONS SINCE THE DAY THE ATOM BOMB WAS USED IN
HIROSHIMA AND SAID: "IF WE DEVIATE FROM OUR PATH,
WHO WILL TRUST OUR WORD."
GOHEEN

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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